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AUTHOR Koch, Norman E.
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ABSTRACT

Stressing language development as the prime component of all learning, this resource book presents suggestions to teachers to aid them in developing children's descriptive language. Basic to the described activities is the concept that vocabulary development is essentially concept development, requires a variety of experiences, and results from the contribution of all elements of communication. Teaching vocabulary requires a planned, systematic presentation such as (1) prereading/writing/speaking/listening; (2) modeling the pattern and developing one as a group; and (3) producing and sharing. Nine ideas for making words come alive in the classroom are listed, as are five suggestions for creating an exciting visual environment. Each activity presented is supplemented with examples and ideas for implementation. Discussed first are some possible uses of paradoxes, including simple, direct, and personal metaphorical questions, conflicting couplets, and opposing and symbolic metaphors. Second, the use of the structured format of many kinds of poetry is encouraged, such as cinquains (targeted and traditional), limericks, couplets, quatrain, triplets, haiku, and diamante. Activities involving word opposites, word pictures, morphology, etymology, acronyms, mixed-up comics, and tall tales are presented and a list of miscellaneous suggestions, challenge activities, and more vocabulary ideas are also included. (JD)

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ENRICHING VOCABULARY

A Resource Book

BETTER READERS

WRITERS

SPEAKERS

LISTENERS

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Dr. Norman E. Koch
Western Oregon State College
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ENRICHED VOCABULARY = BETTER READERS, WRITERS, SPEAKERS, AND LISTENERS

Introduction

Language development is the prime component of all learning - both in and out of classroom settings. Every subject and instructional pattern calls for the use of descriptive language regardless of the child's age or previous experience. Through descriptive language, the child acquires names for things around him as well as words and phrases to describe events and feelings. Language enables the child to analyze or process what he is experiencing and he needs to communicate and explain that experience to others.

New experiences are opportunities for advancing the growth of descriptive language. Language is learned when a child observes, listens, reads, acts, speaks, or writes as part of his interaction with the world around him and the people in it. By establishing a language-rich environment, the teacher insures that children will acquire and practice all of these skills throughout the school day.

Vocabulary must be taught in a planned and systematic fashion. The following key points are basic to the many activities to be presented...

1. Vocabulary development is basically concept development. Language growth and vocabulary growth parallel each other.

2. A variety of experiences contribute to vocabulary development - tasting, touching, smelling, seeing, hearing - and through our emotions.

3. All elements of communication contribute to vocabulary development: reading and writing; speaking and listening, and; visualizing and observing.

The major objective of this booklet is to provide you with examples of teaching techniques that will help students. By using these (and similar) examples, students will:

...enrich their experiences with language
...see words as the names for their experiences
...bring almost-known words into their actual memory
...learn to enjoy language and words
...sharpen both reading and writing skills

Activities

The following suggestions are illustrative of the many ways we can help students expand their vocabularies. If you use the following view of creativity, it will be possible to provide some truly creative activities to your students. Creativity in teaching is..."aiding, assisting, allowing students to produce something uniquely new to them."

MAKE WORDS COME ALIVE IN YOUR CLASSROOM

A. As you read a good book or part of a book orally to your children, stop to enjoy colorful phrases and apt words with them. Chuckle together. (Trealease - Read Aloud Handbook is a great reference.)

B. Bring in from your outside reading any choice phrases and words and descriptions which you think the children will enjoy. Start writing them down. Soon they will be bringing bits to

you and to the class. Take time to describe the sky together each morning. List these someplace in the classroom.

C. If anything happens which especially "sings to the eye," take time during school hours to talk about it. Make this teaching as subtle and as natural a process as possible. Do not say, "Let us describe this" in a monotone voice. Instead, get talking about things until the proper words become as natural as the chalk on the tray. Use positive reinforcement, both verbal and non-verbal, to encourage this.

D. Keep a class notebook of unusual and apt words and phrases that your children use in their writing and talking. Put them on a corner of the bulletin board first before they are written in the book. Have places for words in your room.

E. Share poetry with your children. This is excellent ear training.

F. Work with rhymes and jingles, not only for better pronunciation, but also to getting a feeling for the music of words. Get the children involved in making up their own. Utilize "appropriate" popular music.

G. Keep a journal in your room. First make it together; then a week later let different children write in it every day. Try to make it a little better than a mere record. Let it contain feelings, too. Order "blank" books for your class.

H. Words such as <u>said</u>, <u>good</u>, and <u>nice</u> are <u>tired</u> words. Make new words for their places to

describe a cake, a man, a baby, a party, a conversation, bath salts, fudge and similar things.

I. Have a space on your board marked "50¢ words." Write there unusual words that the children bring from their reading and home conversations.

CREATE A VISUAL ENVIRONMENT

A. Put color in children's writing. Put captions under pictures you mount and put up in your room. We must get children to see mentally as they see visually. Use such captions as these:

These shells cast their stream-lined shadows.
Can you find the exact expression for the look on this boy's face?
Can you find words to describe this sunset?
What name would best fit this kitten?
How would you describe this grandmother's face?
Three silvery geese made a victory sign against the golden moon.
Ripe red strawberries in a bright blue bowl.

Change your pictures often. Don't talk about them. Let them, and the captions do the talking.

B. Capitalize on children's love for comic strips. Talk about the expressions on the faces. Let one child write the episode every time there is an especially good one, paying particular attention to the expressions and the action words.

C. Gather together animal pictures. For a week or two post all the dog pictures. Then have the class think of adjectives to describe each dog and a general noun to compare him with, such as "He's a regular policeman" or "There's something in this face that reminds me of_____" A cat or wild creature or faces of old men and women or babies or adolescent youths make excellent studies. Use the dictionary with the children together.

D. Teach shades of meaning through mounting pictures of increasing size on deepening shades of color paper. For instance, paste a large dog on light yellow paper, a great dog on a deeper yellow shade, and a mammoth dog on a deep gold shade.

E. Mount pictures of food for description. Suitable items are a fresh apple pie, a steaming meat dish, and a cool salad. Get the children to tell what the meringue on the pie looks like, how the meat dish smells, etc. The idea behind this, of course, is to furnish ideas and words for every sight that meets the eye. Remember, most kids love pizza.

PARADOXES

Try contradictory, unbelievable, or absurd statements that may be true. Illustrations of these can be a highly interesting activity. Have students brainstorm and role play. Begin work with oral interchanges among students before progressing to written work. Have them find examples on their own and share them.

PARADOX - ABSURD, UNBELIEVABLE, OR CONTRADICTORY

Can be Verbal or Pictoral

Happy Tears

Icy Hot

METAPHORS

...more precious than gold

...as parched as the dry lake bed

...wrinkled as a prune

SIMPLE--

What is a --------- like?

What is a cloud like?

What is Jello like?

DIRECT--

How is a ---- like ----?

How is a wave like a storm?

How is a chair like a table?

PERSONAL--

What would it feel like
to be -----?

What would it feel like
to be an ice cube?

What would it feel like
to be ten feet tall?

CONFLICTING COUPLETS--

(Two words which seem to
conflict with each other)

Brave Coward Sad Smile
Cruel Savior

OPPOSING METAPHORS--

How is ----- like -----
but not like -----?

--How is ice like a rock
but not like fudge? (You
are trying to produce
thoughts that argue or
conflict with each other.

SYMBOLIC METAPHORS

What symbols might you
use to show the seasons?
What symbols would best
convey the ideas of
kindness?

TYPES OF POETRY

Any subject area can serve as the background theme. Students can utilize the structured format of many kinds of poetry. The pre-writing experience for all language activities can use this model of:

1. Pre-Reading/writing experience
   ...Brainstorm words
   ...Listening activities
   ...Collages
2. List possible words to use or some other organizer
3. Model what you want. Show students the pattern. Develop "one" as a group.
4. Produce and share.

Cinquains - Targeted

After the motivation/introduction, the following words might be placed on the board or a chart - use headings:

Animal/ Bird Words	Movement or Action Words	Describing Words
monkey	flowing	clear
elephant	swinging	bright
rhino	curls	hot
duck	running	cold
dog	bouncing	cool
kitten	hops	warm
hamster	slow	big
chicken	fast	quiet
rabbit	smooth	soft
zebra	bumpy	light
guinea pig	creep	brave

Provide step-by-step directions. Have group create - for example:

Line 1 - Object name
Line 2 - Two words that tell about the first
Line 3 - Three words that tell how the object moves or acts
Line 4 - Two words that tell something special about the first word.
Line 5 - One word with the same meaning as the first word or the same word. (The term synonym does not have to be used.)

EXAMPLES

Pheasant	Silver
Flash, flicker	Money, hue
Hurry, run, scurry	Flows, shared, saved
Beauty, color	Beautiful, coveted
Rooster	Wealth

With the stimulation words before them each child can be encouraged to select a bird, etc., create a cinquain and mount the written cinquain on construction paper.

Traditional Cinquain

Cinquain: 5 unrhymed lines, 22 syllables distributed thus:

Line 1 - two syllables, or one word giving the title
Line 2 - four syllables, or two words giving the title
Line 3 - six syllables, or three words expressing a feeling
Line 5 - two syllables, or another word for the title

Example: Coral

Line 1 - Coral
Line 2 - The stone flower
Line 3 - Of the sea, is the most
Line 4 - Fascinating feature of the
Line 5 - Sea world.
- (Author unknown)

Line 1 - The gull
Line 2 - Effortlessly
Line 3 - Glides on the downward breeze
Line 4 - To land on the soft sandy beach
Line 5 - Quiet

Some teachers have simplified this form so that the number of words rather than syllables per lines the major structural requirement of the cinquain:

Line 1 - one word
Line 2 - two words
Line 3 - three words
Line 4 - four words
Line 5 - one word

REMEMBER - USING NON-SAFE WORDS IS THE GOAL

Limericks

These five line poems are always fun to write, especially after one has captured the form and rhythm. Print a few samples on the chalkboard, pointing out the rhyme scheme. A permanent wall chart like this one may be helpful:

_____ A

_____ A

_____ B

_____ B

_____ A

Here is a limerick which can be written on the chalkboard to illustrate the form taken by these whimsical verses:

There was an old man from Nome,
Who never liked to stay home.
He missed winning a prize,
When out buying pies.
Said he, "I'll never more roam."

Notice that lines 1, 2 and 5 rhyme, while lines 3 and 4 have a different rhyme. Limericks often start with the words, "There was..." The class can write some limericks together before trying it individually. Stress the humor and enjoyment of the poetry rather than the style.

Couplets

Lead your class in writing a poem together in couplets with one student supplying the first line and members of the class suggesting a second line. At Christmas time, for example, a first line might be:

The bells are gaily ringing.

Different lines ending with a rhyme for ringing will be suggested with one being selected to be written on the board beneath the first, such as:

Glad tidings to us bringing.

The poem can be continued with another couplet in the same manner until it is of sufficient length (8-16 lines). One child may then copy the completed poem for display on the bulletin board or in a collection of class writing.

Quatrains

Writing a poem of two rhyming couplets, or a verse of four lines, is a natural continuation of the couplet experience. Possible construction schemes include rhyming lines as follows:

(a) 1,2,3,4

...more
...floor
...score
...door

(b) 2 and 4

...flow
...gate
...run
...late

(c) 1 and 3

...bat
...say
...cat
...gone

(d) 1 and 4, 2 and 3

...roam
...grass
...lass
...home

Triplets

These three-line poems are relatively simple to execute:

From across the street
The wheat
Smelled sweet.

****

HAIKU

The singular advantage of this Japanese form of poetry is in its emphasis upon developing a thought or idea without the burden of constricting rhyme. The conventional haiku form is a three line, unrhymed poem of seventeen syllables, with the lines and syllables distributed as follows:

Line 1 - five syllables
Line 2 - seven syllables
Line 3 - five syllables

Example: About Misty

Flowers are fragile
And like the soft, soft velvet
Of a horse's nose.
-Author unknown

Diamante

This is a diamond shape that enables a student to use many kinds of words to produce "instant" poetry. The format is simple:

1. Lines one and seven respectively are composed of two contrasting nouns to form the points of the diamond.
2. Line two is composed of two adjectives that modify the first noun.
3. Line three contains three participles describing the first noun.
4. Line four is composed of four nouns, related to the subject and making the transition between the contrasting nouns in lines one and seven.
5. Line five consists of three participles which describe the last noun and indicate change or development of the subject.
6. Line six contains two adjectives modifying the noun in line seven and further carrying on the idea of change or development.
7. Line seven is the final noun that is in contrast to the subject, thus completing the diamond shape previously described.

Pantera,
New, fast
Existing, shining, racing,
Car, stick-shift, wheels, engines,
Existing, aging, running,
Old, slow,
Model A.

Gold,
Bright, jewelled,
Twinkling, sparkling, shining,
Beauty, love, dark, gloom,
Sleeping, creaming, dimming,
Night, quiet,
Black.

Desert
Dry, dead
Burning, crackling, searing
Death, solitude, teaming, birth
Churning, rolling, crashing
West, alive
Ocean

Try one:

SUGGESTED WORD ACTIVITIES

WORD OPPOSITES

List words on chart. Ask children to provide several examples of opposites. Large - big, gigantic, huge, titanic, etc. Excellent way to introduce Thesaurus.

WORD PICTURES

Try car, bike, house, school

Morphology

One of the interests of linguistics is morphology. Morphology is the study of the changes that occur in words when different parts are added. Be a morphologist -- see how many endings you can add to the following words.

trick	shirt	poor
whisper	candle	sad
sleep	swift	on
although	sweet	motor
boy	jump	play

Etymology

The whole field of etymology is a rich resource. Get children interested in etymology. Let them give radio talks about the origin of such words as manufacture, and tell how the meaning has changed. Let them find out from the dictionary where such words as these came from:

spoonerism	radius
saxophone	banana
poinsetta	kindergarten
maverick	sabotage
macadam	meringue
guppy	mosquito
plaza	television
sachet	barker
forum	ampere
psychology	Braille
camouflage	teddy bear
memorandum	diesel

ACRONYMS

These are fascinating and turn up in the strangest places. Add to this list:

TAB	UN	SCUBA
NOW	NASA	LASER

MIXED-UP COMICS

Recombination of Ideas into Newer Combinations

Make a collection of a large number of comics. Try to collect comic strips of comparable sizes so the pictures can be interchanged. Mount comics on tonal or construction paper. Cut the individual pictures apart. Mix up several pictures (at least five or six) and place these in an envelope. Black out all conversation or dialogue. Pupils are to draw comic strips from the envelope and do the following:

1. Arrange pictures in an original sequence
2. Create a clever title for the strip
3. Name comic strip characters with an apt or novel name
4. Write dialogue for the characters

TALL TALE -- PAUL BUNYON HYPERBOLES

Intermediate grade children can write better tall tales if some preliminary creative-thinking tasks are done with hyperboles. These are figures which show exaggerated thoughts. Here are phrases which lend themselves to hyperbole:

_____	so high that	_____
_____	so low that	_____
_____	so fat that	_____
_____	so dark that	_____
_____	so hot that	_____
_____	so slow that	_____
_____	so sleepy that	_____
_____	so narrow that	_____

1. The wind blew so hard that it beat itself going.
2. The man snored so loudly that avalanches started in Alaska.
3. The rocket went so fast that the Milky Way sprang a leak.
4. The rain came down so hard that the little black cloud died of exhaustion.
5. The house was so small that a speck of dust couldn't find it.

MISCELLANEOUS

Describe a potato chip with as many relevant words as possible.

Choose a single object and describe it; read your paper to the class and have the others guess what you have written about.

Make up a crossword puzzle using words about a particular topic, as Christmas or some aspect of Social Studies. (See MacIntosh program.)

Think of as many descriptive words as possible to describe the following phrases: (these words are probable describing sounds)

1. a penny falling into a well
2. startled crows
3. trees in a soft breeze
4. a shoe hitting the floor
5. a typewriter
6. air escaping from a balloon
7. a rusty old swing

Make a list of as many words of mystery as you can think of. Now try to find antonyms for these words.

Think of words to describe the following:

1. laughter
2. running
3. a full moon

Now write a paragraph in which you talk about your choice without actually using that word.

Find more appropriate words to use for the underlined words in the following sentences. Give as many examples as possible.

1. That is a neat car!
2. The classroom was very neat.
3. I love apple pie!
4. That is a real pretty picture.

Using a thesaurus and a poem, story or essay that you have written:

1. Find synonyms for words that you have repeated frequently;
2. Find verbs and adjectives that are more descriptive, colorful or interesting...be sure that you know the meaning for each word that you use.

Select a pair of words which are synonyms, but which have slight differences in meaning, such as comely and beautiful, rash an d and adventuresome, duty and obligation, rude and crude. See how the dictionary distinguishes between them.

Find out how to say "Good Morning" in a variety of languages...how to say "Good By" and "How are you?". Arrange for a bulletin board display.

List all the words, phrases and figures of speech (including slang) that you can think of which might be used instead of the word "absurd."

Do the same for "said."

Check ads in the sunday newspapers and bring in words that:

Lure
Beckon
Frighten
Color words

Have the children (either individually or in groups) arrange look-alike words in sound-alike columns. Examples of words to use: bear, wear, fear, ear, pear, gear, tear, near, dear. Have them add to the lists, including words that sound alike but have different spellings, such as care, fair, and spare.

Write a story using pairs of homonyms

bear-bare
night-knight
tear-tier
brake-break
flea-flee
pare-pair-pear
throws-throes
write-right
sealing-ceiling
low-lo!
been-bean

What other words can you find that come to us from mythology?

Write a list of words on the board. Each word must have at least two meanings. Have the children create sentences using the words in different senses. When checking, be sure that words are really used differently.

Suggested words:	switch	crow
	lean	fence
	rose	stern
	limp	note
	row	line
	run	school

Figurative language: Discuss words such as:

Iron Curtain	watershed
political platform	corn belt
magnetic field	red tide

CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

1. How many "palindromes: (words which can be spelled the same forward and backward) can you find? (radar, level)

2. Do you know a word containing double u, a, k, or i? (vacuum, bazaar, aardvark, skiing, Hawaii, bookkeeper, jackknife)

3. Try taking the letters of the alphabet (in order) and make a sensible sentence out of the words.

   Example: A bewhiskered cat dove extra fast, grabbing hams in jumbles, knocking ladies, making noise, offending policemen, queering residents, startling town-people, uncovering victuals, wrecking x-rays, yowling zealously.

MORE VOCABULARY IDEAS

Keep a class notebook of excellent words and phrases found in reading. Have a page for color words, one for hard words, one for soft words, one for action words, etc. Let only the best words be put in the book.

Also -- unusual description. Read aloud from the book often.

Tom Swifties portray a situation in which someone is making a remark that can have two meanings, such as:

1. "I'll have seafood," she muttered crabbily.
2. "I'll never pet another lion," he said offhandedly.
3. "What a beautiful piece of wood," he remarked craftily.

The leader writes on the board five root words, as plant, write, forest, cover, and move. The players are to build new words from these by adding prefixes and/or suffixes within a given time limit. They may use their dictionaries. The player who has written the greatest number of words correctly spelled is the winner. It may be required to use the words in sentences.

Using a magazine picture, list mood words that describe it. Write a paragraph about the picture, including the mood words.

Generic word: Group
Specific word: herd, mob, drove, swarm, team, gang, flask, posse, tribe, troupe, rabble, crew, regiment, litter, bevy, committee, clan, covey, fleet, brood, squad.

HOMONYMS: Rewrite this poem, using all the correct homonyms.

A TAIL OF WHOA by Iris M. Tiedt
(two bee red allowed)

Eye stood before the window pain
To stair out on the stormy seen.
The wind it blue
With grown and mown.
As rain pored threw the lain.

Eye razed my head to view the cite
And new my hart wood brake.
Four rested from hour would
Were awl the furs sew tall and grate
Know more to waive the see.

Aisle ne're forget that dreadful knight
A quire if desolation maid
But hale and creek of bows
Yet still no paws for lesson.
The whether it was fowl.

Then shown at last the mourning son.
The heir now boar the fare suite cent
Of rows and hari belle whet
At piece the wind; knot sew my sole,
Fore their land lei waist.

Summary

These suggested activities are intended as starters for teachers. They should stimulate you to develop your own. Use your imagination--see what you can develop. Explore the area of choral reading. Nothing gives a child a feeling of the lilt of language, its sound, its beauty and its excitement as selections properly presented. Sit down with your colleagues, brainstorm how you could use choral reading, what are some appropriate selections, and how best can you present them to your class. Determine criteria you want students to attain. Model proper choral reading through demonstrations, films, or tapes. Do some with your class--you will find it enjoyable.

This same process:

1. Pre-reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening
2. Model the pattern, develop one as a group
3. Produce and share

can be the outline for presenting any of the activities presented. Remember, language is based in oral tradition--you cannot teach language skills using non-verbal approaches.